



Isles of Scilly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Joint Advisory Committee (JAC)

**Minutes of the meeting held on
March 17th 2010, 10.00 a.m.
Council Chamber,
Old Wesleyan Chapel, St Mary's**

Present:	Johann Hicks (Vice-Chair)	JH
	Marian Bennett	MB
	Craig Dryden	CD
	Chris Gregory	CG
	Mike Gurr	MG
	Zoe Julian	ZJ
	Trevor Kirk (AONB Officer)	TK
	Amanda Martin	AM
	David Mawer	DM
	Richard McCarthy	RM
	Paul St Pierre	PSP
	Jules Webber	JW

In Attendance: Kaydee Torbet

Observer: David Senior

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair opened the meeting at 10.10 a.m.

1. Apologies

Received from Eleanor Breen, Robert Dorrien-Smith, Philip Hygate (Chair), Nick Lishman, Andrew May, Phil McMahon, Matthew Rogers and Bryce Wilby

The Vice-Chair welcomed David Senior, the Climate Change Coordinator for the Council of the Isles of Scilly, who attended the meeting as an observer.

2. Minutes

Minutes of JAC meetings on December 9th 2009, December 16th 2009 (Management Plan Review Meeting) and February 17th 2010 (Management Plan Adoption Meeting) were considered for accuracy.

Minutes of JAC December 9th 2009

The following amendments were noted:

- Pg 6 – Members reports – Mike Gurr – Separate the Bat Group SDF project update from the report on the increase in bat wardens in Scilly by creating a new sentence and deleting 'especially as'.
- Pg 6 – Members reports – Zoe Julian – As ZJ was reporting on two separate websites, create a new paragraph for the Island Tourism LAG application to clarify the separation.

Minutes of JAC December 9th and 16th 2009 and February 17th 2010 were confirmed as accurate records.

The AONB Officer confirmed that a bound copy of the AONB Management Plan 2010-2014 was submitted to the Secretary of State by the census date of February 28th 2010. The Vice-Chair congratulated the AONB Unit on completion of Management Plan review. The Vice-Chair's sentiment was echoed by other members present.

3. Other Items considered urgent by the Chair

In light of recent public comment on the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust (IoSWT) conservation grazing programme, the AONB Officer circulated an email (dated March 16th 2010) to JAC member proposing themes for discussion by JAC:

1. Re-articulation of the AONB Partnership's support for appropriately managed conservation grazing in accordance with the AONB Management Plan 2010-2014, Policy ALP 14
2. Development of a press release on the benefits of conservation grazing, the complex matrix of issues involved (e.g. enhancement of biodiversity, management of the historic environment, tourism, access, permissive footpaths) and the importance of sensitive management and implementation of such programmes
3. Establishment of working group/forum on conservation grazing

DM noted that IoSWT is seeking to enhance the effectiveness and clarity of its public communication through the development of a communication strategy.

MG proposed that the AONB Partnership should reaffirm its support for well-managed conservation grazing in Scilly. MG further noted the benefits of grazing, including the enhancement of biodiversity, such as the presence of Spring Squill on both Bryher and St Mary's. Also, MG noted that prior to grazing public access to the landscape was limited by invasive vegetation.

MB agreed that development of an IoSWT communication strategy is a priority. However, the allocation of time and resources to public communication may be a significant challenge for IoSWT, and one to which AONB Partners are sensitive. Drawing on her experience of the Bryher Grazing Working Group, MB noted that visual information such as maps are effective, as too is written material on the logistics of grazing, such as when and where sites will be grazed and the paths that will be temporarily unavailable.

DM endorsed MB's comments and acknowledged that accurate information needs to be disseminated. DM also noted that paths are rarely blocked, the exceptions being small arterial paths to which alternatives are available.

AM offered IoSWT and the AONB Unit a dedicated notice board at the museum. This facility could be used to disseminate information to residents and visitors on a wide range of issues, including conservation grazing.

CG suggested that the AONB Partnership should acknowledge and publically highlight the challenging nature of the work carried out by IoSWT in relation to landscape management (including grazing) and public access.

10.31 a.m. CD joined the meeting.

ZJ reported that the recent Island Tourism AGM discussed issues around access and grazing in Scilly. The AGM confirmed that Island Tourism supports the principle of conservation grazing. It was noted that the tourism sector must be represented on any grazing and access forum developed by the AONB Partnership.

RM suggested the production of posters showing the areas grazed by IoSWT and the schedule for movement of animals.

PSP noted that any press release must include background information detailing the grazing scheme, its rationale and benefits, and the associated monitoring processes. Monitoring the effects of landscape change is crucial, as too is public information on the challenges and opportunities arising from landscape management. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are an easily accessible forum that may prove successful.

Members were advised that BBC's Spotlight will be visiting the Islands on March 26th 2010 with a view to filming a news item on conservation grazing in Scilly.

The Vice-Chair confirmed for the record JAC's support for IoSWT's grazing scheme. Following detailed discussion JAC resolved to contribute to an IoSWT press release on conservation grazing in the belief that the broader perspectives of AONB Partners represent important context to any IoSWT statement.

Action: AONB Officer to liaise with IoSWT in drafting a press release on conservation grazing.

AM proposed *Scilly Now and Then* as another forum for disseminating information on conservation grazing. DM confirmed that IoSWT had also been approached by Radio Scilly to participate in a question and answer broadcast on conservation grazing.

ZJ offered to work with DM and Callum Deveney (Cornwall Wildlife Trust) to develop a grazing and access working party.

Action: ZJ to draft the structure of a Grazing and Access forum to circulate to members for feedback and for suggestions on membership.

4. AONB Management Plan 2010-2014

Hardcopy of the AONB Management Plan 2010-2014 was circulated to JAC members. The CD version is in production with delivery expected in late-March 2010.

MG was thanked for his ongoing work with the AONB Unit to develop a summary of the Management Plan.

The idea of a formal management plan launch was debated. The general consensus was that a formal launch is not necessary but that links should be sought between the Management Plan and community event such as WalkScilly, thereby emphasising the plan's relevance to the local community.

5. Partnership Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement

The Partnership Agreement (PA) is between Natural England and the host authority. The draft agreement (circulated prior to the meeting) is based on a standardised national proforma. The PA includes the AONB Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) as an appendix. The MoA is an updated version of the MoA adopted in 2002 by the full AONB Partnership (both funding and non-funding partners)

11.06a.m. AM left the meeting.

The AONB Officer reported that the PA and MoA will be presented to the Planning and Development Committee on April 20th with a recommendation that they be adopted by the host authority.

JW noted that, due to delays in development of the PA, the agreement is already in its third and final year. However, Natural England intends to roll over the agreement without the need for revision and re-adoption next year.

Under section 9.3, MG requested clarification of the procedure for electing a temporary Chair. It was agreed that the decision would be made at the time of the relevant JAC meeting.

Voting arrangements under Section 10 were clarified. The draft does not extend voting rights to JAC members elected as private individuals or community representatives. Members resolved to amend the document to extend voting rights to all JAC members.

RM requested that the JAC membership list be updated to include the Five Islands School. AM requested that members not formally representing an organisation should also be included in the membership listing.

Action: JAC approved the PA/MoA subject to minor amendments defined in the JAC minutes (March 17th 2010)

6a. Review of AONB JAC Planning Protocol

The AONB JAC Planning Protocol adopted in 2006 includes a requirement for annual review. A revised draft (circulated prior to the meeting) incorporates JAC members' views harvested by the AONB Officer during an initial round of consultation.

Resolution: JAC adopted the revised AONB JAC Planning Protocol subject to JAC members' recommendations for minor editorial amendment being channelled to the AONB Officer outside the meeting.

Action: The revised AONB JAC Planning Protocol will be presented to the Planning and Development Committee on April 20th 2010 as an item for Members' information.

6b. Planning Consultative Panel Recommendations: Summary Report

Following a JAC resolution in December 2009, a summary of PCP recommendations is a standing item on the JAC agenda.

CD stressed the value of robust and detailed PCP reports to not only himself as Chief Planning Officer but also to members of the Planning and Development Committee.

RM reiterated the usefulness of PCP reports, though noted that the summary reports to JAC could usefully include the planning decisions.

6c. Local Development Framework Consultation

CD informed JAC that the Core Strategy Scoping Report has progressed through consultation, including invitation for comment from all AONB partners. The Statement of Community Involvement is being reviewed. The consultee list is extensive list, including the Isles of Scilly Bat Group which was omitted from the original list of consultees.

7. Members Reports

David Mawer Angie Gall collaborated with Natural England and the AONB Unit to organise a WISE (Wildlife Safe) training scheme. Designed for boat operators and water users in Scilly, the course highlighted best practice for minimising disturbance of the sea-life around Scilly.

Paul St Pierre Vickie Heaney will be doing seabird monitoring again this summer.

Richard McCarthy A Duchy of Cornwall holiday let on Bryher has become available for local community housing.

Chris Gregory Nothing further to add.

Craig Dryden The Economic Development section of the Planning and Development Department is expanding, with the Regional Development Agency (RDA) increasing capacity to implement the Convergence Programme in Scilly. Workspace on the off-Islands and the Porthcressa Master Plan are part of this delivery.

Local Action Group (LAG) is working well with a number of projects already receiving grants.

Challenges still lie ahead in delivery of the mainland-Scilly ferry link.

Julie Webber Condition assessments are continuing on Scilly's SSSIs notified for geological interest.

It is hoped that a workshop will be held in May on the new Environmental Stewardship options for Scilly.

Zoe Julian The Island Tourism AGM was held the week before JAC meeting. There is some developing interest in green tourism, driven in part by the prospect of funding through SDF or LAG.

LAG has approved funding for a tourism industry website.

The Council's Tourism Team has secured an increase cruise ship visits. There is trepidation in some quarters over the influx of people but these concerns are balanced against increased investment in the Islands' economy.

Island Tourism is undertaking a recruitment drive with a 'special offer' if a friend is introduced.

Marian Bennett continues to work to secure the future of the mainland-Scilly ferry link.

MB is also working with the Duchy of Cornwall on the development of the new shop on Bryher.

The community group behind the Local Produce Market has formalised itself. It is hoped that they will put together a bid for LAG funding.

Marian has signed up to the Scilly Community Archaeology Group and encourages others to do so.

Mike Gurr is working with Maria Wilby to add bat conservation to the initiatives supported by the Five Island School Green Team. MG gave a presentation to the students and has begun work on bat projects with the students.

Forthcoming Walk Scilly 2010 will include some bat walks. The next meeting of the Isles of Scilly Bat Group is April 1st 2010.

8. **AONB Officer's Report**

A Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) Working Group meeting is taking place on the Islands on March 26th 2010. Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS) and Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) consultations are also scheduled in the near future.

The AONB Unit has been working closely with the LAG Programme Manager and SIF team with 2 SDF supported projects also securing LAG funding.

Isles of Scilly AONB gateway signage is being developed, including a new contract at Exeter Airport and rebranding of the AONB gateway signage on Scillonian III and at airports/heliports on St Mary's, Land's End, Newquay and Penzance.

RM asked for an update on support for the bee group in Scilly which was agreed at JAC in September 2009. The AONB Officer reported that beekeepers are putting together a proposal for AONB support.

June 16th 2010 was confirmed as the date for the next JAC meeting. Traditionally the June JAC meeting is held on an off-island. JAC suggested that Tresco Estate should be approached as a potential host.

Action: AONB Officer to invite Tresco Estate to host JAC meeting on June 16th 2010, to be followed by an afternoon field visit highlighting the challenges and opportunities faced in conserving and enhancing the AONB environment and in fostering sustainable social and economic development.

The chair closed the meeting at 11.59 a.m.